



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

July 16, 1985

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

The Right Honourable
The Viscount Norwich
24 Blomfield Road, W9
England

Sir:

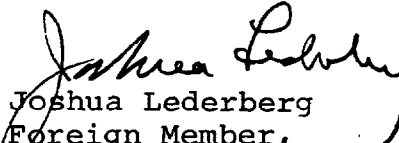
This letter is a query about the history of Venice (and Genoa).

More particularly, I write to ask if you have any comment on the authenticity of the document by DeMussis, cited in the enclosed article by Derbes. It fills out the story of the origin of the black death in Europe in a very particular way. I have been deeply interested in that historic event as a prototype for what may befall us with the recrudescence of biological warfare. Hence, I would be very much obliged for any bolstering (or otherwise) of the historiographic basis of this narrative. I am unaware of any one else with your depth of scholarship in Venetian or Genoese History; and so I would be very much obliged to you indeed if you have any comment whatever.

I note from your biography in Who's Who that you were in the British delegation to the disarmament conference until 1964. I had the privilege of attending at the CD during the negotiation of the biological warfare disarmament treaty, ca. 1970.

Needless to say, if you can refer me to any other sources of commentary on the DeMussis archive, that would be most satisfactory, with the least imposition on your own time.

Yours very truly.


Joshua Lederberg
Foreign Member,
The Royal Society

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